

Arieh Warshel to receive 2018 Ellis Island Medal of Honor

Arieh Warshel, Nobel laureate, Distinguished Professor in Chemistry and Biochemistry, holder of the Dana and David Dornsife Chair in Chemistry, will join other outstanding luminaries on May 12, to receive a 2018 Ellis Island Medal of Honor from the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO).

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor commends a select group of individuals whose achievements and exceptional service to our nation embody the American spirit in their patriotism, tolerance, brotherhood and diversity, and is among the nation's most celebrated awards. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have officially recognized the Ellis Island Medals of Honor, and each year the recipients are listed in the Congressional Record.

Warshel will join an elite group of honorees this year including American literary critic, historian, filmmaker and professor Henry Louis Gates Jr., H.S.H Albert II Prince of Monaco, USC Marshal School alumnus and philanthropist David Nazarian, and the Honorable Adam Schiff of California's 28th District. A black-tie gala will immediately follow the award ceremony in the historic original registry room in the Great Hall, a symbolic and literal gateway for 12 million immigrants to the U.S.

"I am humbled and honored to be included among this year's Ellis Island Medals of Honor awardees," Warshel said. "I believe that by awarding the Medal to scientists highlights the crucial impact of those who came to the U.S. from other countries and enhanced in a remarkable way the American scientific landscape." Warshel, who is now a Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, was recruited to teach at USC in 1976 where he and his research team continue to pioneer the key models for computer simulations of the functions of biological molecules.

One of the world's leading theoretical chemists, Warshel directs his research team at the Warshel Center for Multiscale Simulations on the campus of USC. He is also the executive director of the Warshel Institute of Computational Biology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in Shenzhen, China, and the author of the book, *Computer Modeling of Chemical Reactions in Enzymes and Solutions*. Warshel, who has earned a reputation as a hardworking, hard-driving and a very original thinker, stated "This award recognizes those who work persistently towards their goals, exploiting their original thinking and innovative ideas. A part of that originality emerges as a result of coming from a different culture, with different ways of conceptualizing various phenomena."

USC is home to several Ellis Island Medal of Honor recipients, celebrated for their dedicated service and achievements. Past USC honorees include USC President C. L. Max Nikias, PhD, David Angus, MD, professor of medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, founding director of the Lawrence J. Ellison Institute for Transformative Medicine of USC and director of the USC Center for Applied Molecular Medicine, and Thomas Lee, MD, associate professor of clinical ophthalmology at the Keck School of Medicine, who received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 2016, 2017 and 2012 respectively.

Since the Medal was founded in 1986, EIHS has honored distinguished and diverse Americans including seven Presidents of the United States, Vice-President Joe Biden, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Nobel laureates Elie Wiesel and Malala Yousafzai, Coretta Scott King, John Sculley, Muhammad Ali, Lee Iacocca and Rosa Parks, among other outstanding Americans.